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Auto Safety Hotline

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What is Auto Safety Hotline?

The Auto Safety Hotline is a toll-free telephone service operated by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), an agency of the U.S. Department of Transportation. Hotline operators provide callers with information on motor vehicle safety recalls, safety defect investigations, new car crash test results, and other safety topics.

They also take consumer complaints about possible safety defects, and assist callers who are having difficulty obtaining repair work for an existing safety recall. Safety literature can also be obtained from the Hotline.

Who Can Use the Auto Safety Hotline?

Anyone who has access to a telephone can use the Hotline. The Hotline **toll-free** number can be reached from anywhere in the United States—including Hawaii and Alaska, the Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. The number is (800) 424-9393, except in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, where callers should dial 426-0123. The Hotline also is available to the hearing impaired through teleprinter (TTY) receiving and sending facilities found in many libraries and other public places. The TTY **toll-free** number is (800) 424-9153 (755-8919 in the Washington, D.C. area).

When Can I Call?

Hotline operators are on duty Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., eastern time. However, you can call anytime, day or night, seven days a week. If you call after hours, an answering machine will record your name, address and request. The information requested will be mailed to you.

Will the Operators Answer All My Questions?

Hotline operators are specially trained to respond to many automotive safety questions. If the question is very technical, the operator may send you a written explanation or may ask one of NHTSA's engineers to call you back. If your question deals with a non-safety problem, you may be referred to another federal agency.

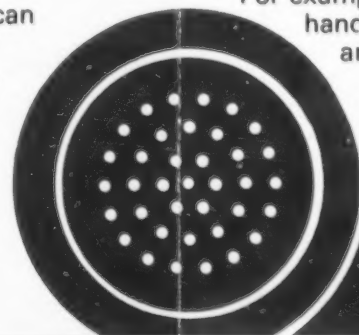
For example, the Federal Trade Commission handles inquiries on automobile warranties and problems with dealers, and the Environmental Protection Agency is responsible for problems with emission control systems. Hotline operators are unable to recommend specific cars, equipment or service facilities.

If I Have a Safety Problem with My Car, Should I Call the Hotline?

Yes. Consumers are the primary source of information used by NHTSA to identify safety problems in motor vehicles, tires and automotive equipment. When you call to report a safety problem, you will be sent a pre-addressed, postage-paid questionnaire so you can provide the details of the problem(s). When you mail it back, the questionnaire is evaluated to determine if the problem is safety-related and compared with other complaints to see if a pattern is developing. We also forward a copy of your complaint to the appropriate manufacturer. In many cases, the manufacturers take action on their own to resolve consumer problems.

What Happens Next?

When NHTSA suspects the possibility of a safety-related defect, a preliminary evaluation is started and the manufacturer is contacted and asked to provide information about the alleged problem. If the agency's analysis of the manufacturer's response concludes that there is a possibility of a defect, an engineering analysis is undertaken to define the problem and the safety consequences. At this point, the manufacturer may be asked to conduct a voluntary recall. If the manufacturer declines to recall, and the evidence points to a safety-related defect, NHTSA opens a formal defect investigation. If the investigation concludes that a safety defect exists, the agency makes an initial determination of a defect and holds a public meeting to permit the manufacturer and the public to present their views. After the hearing, the agency makes a final decision on the matter and a recall may be ordered. However, most safety defect cases are resolved before a recall is ordered. When a manufacturer becomes aware of a problem, the product may be recalled voluntarily.



**Is Auto Safety
and Consumer
Information Available
Only by Phone?**

The Hotline is a convenient,
free way to request safety
information. But if you
prefer to write for
information, use the handy
form on the back page of
this pamphlet. Simply check
the subject(s) which interest
you, remove the page and
mail it to the address listed.
Please include your
name, address
and telephone
number.

(800) 424-9393

**Please send me the following
information.**

- ☐ Safety belts, child safety seats, and automatic protection (#51)
- ☐ How can I help fight drunk driving (#52)
- ☐ Questionnaire to report a safety defect (#23)
- ☐ Annual report on safety recalls for _____ (#11)
(year)
- ☐ Recall(s) on: _____
(Year) (make & model of car)
- ☐ Tires (#16 & #17)
- ☐ New car crash test results (#53)
- ☐ How to import a motor vehicle (#29)
- ☐ U.S. road symbols and signs (#21)
- ☐ Current year fuel economy ratings (#18 & #19)
- ☐ Odometer regulations (#20)
- ☐ Uniform Tire Quality Grading Report (#54)

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Please mail to:

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Auto Safety Hotline - NEF-11-HL
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590



YOUR LIFE IS IN YOUR HANDS.



U.S. Department of Transportation
**National Highway Traffic Safety
Administration**

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